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Atlanta, GA  
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The Most Venerable Nichidatsu Fujii, Founder and Preceptor

February 4, 2001

To: US Dept. of Energy  
Oak Ridge Operations Office  
Attn: Gary Hartman  
Fax: 865-576-1237

Re: Environmental Impact Statement for Y-12

First, I wish to express my concern with the manner in which the Dept. of Energy released the EIS for the Y-12 plant. After promising its release for months, the report was finally made public in the quietest way possible during the Christmas holidays so as to receive as little notice. The issue of nuclear weapons production is of great concern to all citizens of the world and ought not be treated as political intrigue. In the DOE's release of the report, the right of the public to know was technically honored but the spirit of democracy and open discussion was mocked.

I am requesting that a copy of the EIS be sent to the address on this letterhead so that I can fully review it. I did not hear about the public comment session on Jan. 25 until it was passed, but I would like to offer my comment here.

I understand that the EIS includes a discussion about a new "special materials complex" for Oak Ridge. Of course this means that Oak Ridge would continue in the nuclear bombs making business for years to come. I unequivocally oppose this "special materials complex."

What benefit has come from 50 years of nuclear weapons production? Rocky Flats, Hanford, Fernald, Savannah River Site, and Oak Ridge are tremendously contaminated with little hope of ever being completely cleaned up. But the contamination has not remained within the boundaries of these nuclear weapons production sites. For example the aquifer in Georgia has been contaminated by radioactive waste from SRS. How will we ever clean that up?

How much money has been spent in 50 years on nuclear weapons production as opposed to education, health care and protection of the environment? We have a stockpile of nuclear weapons that feeds no one, educates no one, houses no one, heals no one. Rather than provide security, as some claim, these weapons, in fact, offer us nothing but the threat of destruction and contamination.

For any organization, government or empire, it is not the so-called enemies from without who pose a threat but the enemies from within. If the DOE continues to pursue a policy of nuclear weapons production, the moral, financial and environmental burden will be devastating and eventually spell our ruin. The DOE needs to address the needs of the current age and not be mired in an obsolete policy that has no military purpose and drains the resources of our nation.

Signed, *Denise Laffan*  
Sister Denise Laffan

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### Comment No. 1

Issue Code: 25

DOE has made every effort to ensure that the preparation of the SWEIS has involved the public and interested stakeholders. DOE has encouraged public participation in the process beginning with the initial scoping meetings and continuing with incorporation of public comments in the Final Y-12 SWEIS. Furthermore, DOE has consulted with a number of other Federal and state agencies during the preparation of the Y-12 SWEIS. The SWEIS has been reviewed by other state and Federal agencies. The NEPA process is established through CEQ's regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508). In addition, DOE has developed its own implementing regulations for NEPA (10 CFR Part 1021). This SWEIS was prepared in accordance with both sets of regulations, as well as NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

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### Comment No. 2

Issue Code: 21

Comment noted.

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### Comment No. 3

Issue Code: 16

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has significantly reduced the size of its nuclear weapons stockpile, and DOE has dismantled more than 15,000 nuclear weapons. At the present time, the United States is further downsizing its deployed nuclear weapons stockpile consistent with the terms of the START I and START II. Although Russia suspended its nuclear weapons dismantlement activities on January 20, 2001, DOE has continued its weapons dismantlement activities. While future arms control reductions may change requirements for maintaining the weapons stockpile, DOE is responsible for meeting the current requirements set forth by the President and Congress. The need for nuclear weapons and the issue of how many nuclear weapons the United States maintains as a nuclear deterrent are beyond the scope of the Y-12 SWEIS.

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